IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please inset the following new paragraph at page 1, line 1 between the Title and the Background of The Invention:

Related Applications:

This application is a continuation of Application No. 10/231,007 filed August 30, 2002, which is a continuation of Application No. 09/649,217, filed August 28, 2000, which is a continuation of Application No. 09/183,555, filed October 29, 1998, which claims priority to Provisional Application No. 60/079,881, filed March 30, 1998, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please amend the specification as set forth below:

Page 8, replace lines 14-17 with the following paragraphs:

--FIGS. 9a and 9b are enlarged side views of ductile hinges in initial and expanded positions with shortened struts to illustrate axial contraction relationships;

FIG. 10 is a side view of a portion of an alternative embodiment of a tissue supporting device having a high-crush-strength and low-recoil; and

FIG. 11 is an enlarged side view of a tissue-supporting device in accordance with an alternative embodiment of the invention.--

Page 11, replace lines 10-14 with the following paragraph:

--FIG. 3a shows a ductile hinge 36 formed by a pair of opposed circular grooves 38, 40. According to this embodiment the circumferential slot 26 has semicircular ends 38 having a radius of curvature. Outer semicircular grooves 40 oppose the semicircular ends 38 and also have a radius of curvature which is the same as that of the grooves 38. FIG. 3c shows another ductile hinge 54 formed by a parabolic groove 56.--

Page 11, replace lines 20-23 with the following paragraph:

--For smaller deflection, this very high strain concentration at the bisecting plane is acceptable, and in some cases, useful. For stent crimping purposes, for example, it is desirable to generate relatively large plastic deformations at very small deflection angles.--

Page 13, replace lines 8-25 with the following paragraph:

--FIG. 3e shows an asymmetric ductile hinge 64 that produces different strain versus deflection-angle functions in expansion and compression. Each of the ductile hinges 64 is formed between a convex surface 68 and a concave surface 69. The ductile hinge 64 according to a preferred embodiment essentially takes the form of a small, prismatic curved beam having a substantially constant cross section. However, a thickness of the curved ductile hinge 64 may vary somewhat as long as the ductile hinge width remains constant along a portion of the hinge length. The width of the curved beam is measured along the radius of curvature of the beam. This small curved beam is oriented such that the small

concave surface 69 is placed in tension in the device *crimping* direction, while the larger *convex* surface 68 of the ductile hinges is placed in tension in the device *expansion* direction. Again, there is no local minimum width of the ductile hinge 64 along the (curved) ductile hinge axis, and no concentration of material strain. During device expansion tensile strain will be distributed along the convex surface 68 of the hinge 64 and maximum expansion will be limited by the angle of the walls of the concave notch 69 which provide a geometric deflection limiting feature. Maximum tensile strain can therefore be reliably limited by adjusting the initial length of the convex arc shaped ductile hinge 64 over which the total elongation is distributed.--

Page 23, replace lines 23-26 with the following paragraph:

--According to one example of the present invention, the struts 72 are positioned initially at an angle of about 0° to 45° with respect to a longitudinal axis of the device. As the device is expanded radially from the unexpanded state illustrated in FIG. 10, the strut angle increases to about 20° to 80°.--

Page 23, replace lines 27-28 through page 24, lines 1-7 with the following paragraph:

--According to one alternative embodiment of the present invention, the expandable tissue supporting device can also be used as a delivery device for certain beneficial agents including drugs, chemotherapy, or other agents. Due to the structure of the tissue

supporting device incorporating ductile hinges, the widths of the struts can be substantially larger than the struts of the prior art devices. The struts due to their large size can be used for beneficial agent delivery by providing beneficial agent on the struts or within the struts. Examples of beneficial agent delivery mechanisms include coatings on the struts, such as polymer coatings containing beneficial agents, laser drilled holes in the struts containing beneficial agent, and the like. Referring to FIG. 11, an alternative embodiment of a tissue supporting device is shown generally by reference number 180, with like reference numerals being used to denote like parts to those discussed above with respect to FIG. 4b. In addition, device 180 includes laser drilled holes 182 in the elongated beams or struts 88 for containing a beneficial agent 184.--